



## letting it go by Val-Creative

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**Summary:** It's understandable. Why Jane's police man seems cautious around Kali. He's only trying to protect his family. But so is she.

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El wishes Hopper would let her open the windows.

Spring has a kind of blissful, lingering *warmth*, reverberating with insects chirping in the distance and birds twittering in the treetops. She hums to herself, pressing her lips together into a slight frown, just to chase away the immense silence of the cabin. El scrubs over her naked arms and throat with a washcloth, lounging in a bathtub of clear water.

Out of nowhere, a teal and sapphire and violet butterfly trails into view, living and glowing above El's head. Her jaw slacks. El stares, awed, reaching tentatively with fingertips before it hits her. She scrambles out of the tub, dragging on her baggy pants and tee.

"Whoa, whoa!" Hopper shouts over his morning newspaper, nearly getting barrelled into. "Young lady, get back here!"

Bathwater soaks through El's clothes, as she races for the cabin-door, flinging it open.

"Sister!" El yells, smiling so widely her lips tremble. A woman approaches up the gravel walkway, short in stature and with dark, lovely skin covered in swollen and discolored welts. Kali's right eye like a massive bruise. A layer of bright red blood tacking against Kali's upper lip.

Her balance fails her. Kali collapses, not uttering a noise.

El screams out for her sister, for Hopper, for someone to help. By the time El grabs her, hauling her into her arms, Hopper joins El, ordering his daughter to be gentle and help him carry her inside.

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"She has to stay," El murmurs, staring pleadingly at the bedroom doorway.

It's the middle of the night. She curls up on her own quilted bed, next to the lamplight and Kali coming in and out of consciousness for ibuprofen. Her hand pets softly through Kali's black, undyed hair.

*"Please..."*

Hopper contemplates his options, groaning, rubbing over his mustache and chin.

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It's understandable. Why El's police man seems cautious and reluctant around Kali. He's only trying to protect his family.

*(So is she.)*

He drinks on the job. Smokes heavily. After hiding out in the cabin for another month, Kali also takes notice of the prescription drugs not meant for him. Left out on the kitchen table. El doesn't seem to know that her father figure is slowly poisoning himself.

Kali examines her reflection, touching over her healed facial injuries. Back in the city, Kali's gang left each other. They had different ambitions. She ended up getting into a physical altercation with another gang, right before leaving Chicago. Kali doesn't know how she kept herself going all the way into southern woodland Indiana.

It's not difficult to conjure Sara into Hopper's mind. She's *always* there — young, old, bald, tendrils of bright blonde in her face. In a powder-blue sundress going her knees, stepping from the light.

*"Daddy..."*

"Ohh, no," Hopper breathes out, rubbing his palms over his eyelids.  
"No, no, *no*..."

"Daddy, I know you're in pain," Sara murmurs, innocent and kind and

fully grown. Kali stands off to the side, unnoticed. "I know you wanna rest. But I'm not here anymore, Daddy. You can't follow me."

"Baby girl..."

Sara kneels down in front of him, her big, blue eyes pleading. "Please..."

"I didn't get to see you grow up. I didn't get to see you live."

"You did, Daddy. I wasn't scared when I had you." He sobs out, and Sara's mouth twitches into a smile. "And now Jane has you."

"Jane..."

Hopper's voice sounds far-away.

"Take care of her for me, Daddy." A tear slips out of Kali's eye — the same glistening tear on Sara's cheek. "*She's my sister.*"

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*Stranger Things isn't mine. Requested by glove23 (FFN): "kali coming back into el's life And Sister energy." YOU KNOW IM ABOUT TO DO THIS FOR YOU. AND FOR ALL OF US WHO LOVE KALI AND KALI&EL. I made myself cry a little while working on this so there's that joajdsakdjas please enjoy and any thoughts welcomed!*